United Nations A/63/115 (Part I)

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 July 2008
English
Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Sixty-third session
Items 88 and 94 of the preliminary list*

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	2
II.	Observations	3–5	2
III.	Replies received from Governments		3
	Cuba		3
	Iran (Islamic Republic of)		4
	Iraq		8
	Japan		9
	Kuwait		11
	Netherlands		12
	Qatar		13
	Spain		14
	Syrian Arab Republic		15

* A/63/50.

08-41885 (E) 300708 310708

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 62/18 of 5 December 2007, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultations with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 46/30 of 6 December 1991, taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to his report of 10 October 1990 (A/45/435) or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In paragraph 11 of the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session a report on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. On 25 February 2008, a note verbale was sent to all Member States drawing their attention to paragraph 10 of resolution 62/18 and seeking their views on the matter. Replies, which have been received from Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Qatar, Spain and the Syrian Arab Republic, are reproduced in section III below. Additional replies received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Observations

3. The issue of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East remains important. It is recalled that at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in Geneva from 28 April to 9 May 2008, States parties reiterated their support for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, reaffirmed the importance of the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and recognized that the resolution remained valid until its goals and objectives were achieved. Furthermore, the League of Arab States reiterated its call upon the international community to take effective practical steps to that end.

4. The Secretary-General has continued to carry out various consultations with concerned parties within and outside the region in order to explore further ways and means of promoting the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

5. The Secretary-General underlines that efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace continue to be needed. He hopes that the Middle East peace process will move forward, building on the developments in the past year, including the international conference held in Annapolis, Maryland, United States of America in November 2007, the resumption of bilateral Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and other relevant trends, and within the framework of the road map developed by the Quartet of the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Nations. He welcomes the constructive role played by the League of Arab States. The Secretary-General calls upon all concerned parties within and outside the region to resume dialogue with a view to creating stable

security conditions and an eventual settlement that would facilitate the process of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. The Secretary-General reiterates the continued readiness of the United Nations to provide any assistance deemed helpful in that regard.

III. Replies received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[11 June 2008]

1. Cuba has repeatedly stated, in international forums, its position of principle concerning nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, which is one of the highest priorities of Cuba's foreign policy. It has also expressed its concern about the threat which the continued existence of nuclear weapons poses to humanity, stressing the importance of pursuing non-proliferation efforts in parallel with efforts towards general and complete disarmament in relation to nuclear weapons.

2. For the achievement of this objective, the nuclear Powers have a fundamental responsibility to honour their unequivocal commitment to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, which represent the most serious threat to humanity's survival.

3. In this connection, Cuba has supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various countries or regions of the world as part of the effort to expedite nuclear non-proliferation and attain the objective of nuclear disarmament. It is important that these zones be formed on the basis of agreements freely negotiated among the States of the region concerned and that they include mechanisms for cooperation among the States parties and signatories to guarantee that the countries remain seriously committed to this goal.

4. The establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean has helped to demonstrate its importance on the path to nuclear disarmament. Likewise, the first Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones, held in Tlatelolco, Mexico, from 26 to 28 April 2005, also provides great encouragement to the member States of such zones and constitutes a useful way to pursue new forms of cooperation.

5. Cuba supports the proposal to make the Middle East region a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in line with the wishes expressed by the overwhelming majority of the countries in the area and in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991), as well as other resolutions adopted by consensus by the General Assembly.

6. The establishment of such a zone, in addition to making an important contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament, would represent a milestone in the Middle East peace process. Israel, the only country in the region that has neither become nor stated its intention to become a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, should renounce the possession of nuclear weapons and place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic

Energy Agency safeguards, in line with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), in order to comply promptly and unconditionally with the just demands of the international community.

7. Together with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Cuba reiterates the call for a complete and total ban on the transfer to Israel of nuclear equipment, information, material or facilities, as well as resources or implements for this purpose and the provision of nuclear-related scientific or technological assistance. In addition, it expresses its concern about the continued assistance and access afforded to Israeli nuclear scientists, which may have potentially serious negative consequences for security in the region.

8. It is common knowledge that Israel's ability to act with impunity in this regard is due in large part to the protection that it enjoys from the Government of the United States of America in the Security Council and other international forums. That country has paralysed the Security Council by exercising its veto power against draft resolutions relating to the question of Palestine and by repeatedly threatening to make use of this antidemocratic and outdated privilege.

9. The statements made by the Prime Minister of Israel on 12 December 2006, admitting that Israel is a nuclear-weapon State, are of grave concern. Israel's acquisition of nuclear capabilities represents a threat to the security of neighbouring States and to peace in the region, which is already in turmoil. The occupation of Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq and the threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United States of America, and particularly that country's new "National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction", which for the first time envisages the use of nuclear weapons to respond to an enemy attack with conventional weapons, not only hinder the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, but also jeopardize the zones already established and affect the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

10. In view of the critical situation now prevailing in the Middle East, Cuba reaffirms the ongoing responsibility of the United Nations, including the Security Council, with respect to peace and security in the region, including the solution of the question of Palestine.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[12 May 2008]

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone is a recognized regional means of strengthening regional and international peace and security. More importantly, it plays an instrumental role in preventing the threat of nuclear war. Such an arrangement is in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

2. More than three decades have elapsed since this idea was introduced for the very first time by Iran in 1974. The resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which have been constantly adopted without a vote by the General Assembly since 1980, represent the importance of the realization of this noble idea in the vital region of the Middle East. The following

paragraphs list the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in fulfilling the principles and objectives of the resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East at three levels — national, regional and international — and include conclusions on the way ahead.

National measures

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran, by renouncing the possession of nuclear weapons and placing its nuclear facilities under the safeguard system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has shown its resolute determination to achieve the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Those actions underscore its undiminished support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, with the ultimate objective of securing a world free from nuclear weapons.

4. The Islamic republic of Iran ratified the statute of IAEA in 1958 and in 1969 signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which its Parliament ratified in 1970. This process was furthered by the ratification of the IAEA safeguards agreement in 1973 and culminated in the signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

5. In implementation of the obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, specifically articles II and III thereof, all nuclear facilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are devoted to peaceful purposes and are under the full-scope safeguards of IAEA. Furthermore, in order to contribute to the realization of a world free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran has also joined the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Regional measures

6. While supporting all measures taken to date to regionally develop the idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa and South-East Asia, the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone located entirely in the northern hemisphere in its immediate vicinity, i.e., the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly believes that such measures and attempts, if considered seriously and globally by States, will be a step towards promoting international peace and security for the whole world as well as further strengthening the nuclear disarmament efforts. Nevertheless, there are enough reasons to indicate that the establishment of such a zone is particularly significant in the Middle East, especially in the present circumstances.

7. Notwithstanding the global attempts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Middle East, it is regretful that 30 years after the adoption of the General Assembly resolution, initially proposed by Iran, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no progress has been achieved towards its realization owing to the intransigent policy of the Israeli regime. Owing to the non-adherence of Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and more importantly, the refusal of this regime to place its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the IAEA verification system, the realization of such a zone — a lofty and long-sought aspiration of the countries in the region — has yet

to materialize. The irresponsible behaviour of this regime in this respect has put the establishment of such a zone in the region in the near future in serious doubt.

8. As the Final Document of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty shows, after the accession of several countries to the Treaty, all countries in the Middle East region, except for the Israeli regime, have become parties to the Treaty. The Sixth Review Conference requested all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, the States of the Middle East and other interested States, to report through the Conference and the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee meetings to be held in advance of the Conference, on the steps that have been taken to promote the achievement of such a zone and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

9. The next step is to take concrete measures towards securing the adherence of the Israeli regime to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons without any delay and without any condition as a non-nuclear-weapon party, and to place all its nuclear-related facilities under the IAEA verification system.

10. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/18 of 5 December 2007, the Secretary-General would inform the Assembly of the result of his consultations with the countries in the region on the realization of the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It is still our conviction that the Secretary-General should dispatch his special envoy to the countries in the region for the required consultations with those countries to facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. At present, Israel is the only non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the region. Despite repeated calls by the international community, demonstrated in the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and related resolutions of the General Assembly, IAEA and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Israel, confident of the political and military support of the United States of America, has neither acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons nor placed its nuclear facilities under the full scope of IAEA safeguards. Israel has not even declared its intention to accede to the Treaty. Israel's clandestine nuclear activities seriously threaten regional peace and security and endanger the non-proliferation regime.

11. Unfortunately, the inaction imposed upon the Security Council over the past several decades in addressing the well-documented illicit nuclear weapons programme of the Israeli regime has given this regime the audacity to explicitly acknowledge possession of nuclear weapons, as has been divulged by the Israeli Prime Minister in an interview with a German television station on 12 December 2006, in contradiction to the long-sought idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Moreover, the Israeli regime's clandestine development and possession of nuclear weapons not only violate basic principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and numerous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, but also clearly defy the demands and concerns of the overwhelming majority of the United Nations Member States and constantly and obstinately disregard the international community which has, time and again, called on this regime to renounce nuclear weapons and accede to the Treaty.

12. Considering the above, the Security Council should have fulfilled its Charter-based responsibility to address such a clear and serious threat to international peace

and security and take prompt and appropriate actions accordingly. The Israeli regime is the only obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Peace and stability cannot be achieved in the Middle East while the massive Israeli nuclear arsenal continues to threaten the region and beyond.

International measures

13. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in a positive response to the invitation of the Sixth Review Conference to the States parties, has lent his unreserved support for the early establishment of the zone free from nuclear weapons, and has spared no effort to achieve this invaluable objective.

14. The decision of the 2000 Review Conference reaffirms the political will of the international community regarding the importance of the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East.

15. The idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone as an important disarmament and confidence-building measure in the region of the Middle East was first initiated by Iran in 1974, followed by the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly. Since 1980, the General Assembly has annually adopted, by consensus, a resolution on this issue. The repeated adoption of this resolution by the General Assembly is a manifestation of the global support for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Middle East through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

16. As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully committed to its international undertakings and believes that this international instrument is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to this treaty, particularly in the region of the Middle East, would effectively ensure the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

17. The 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed the importance of the resolution on the Middle East. Due to the significant provisions of this resolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other States in the region would expect it to be swiftly implemented especially by its co-sponsors, i.e. the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern Ireland as depositories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

18. The Islamic Republic of Iran, in its bilateral and multilateral disarmament dialogues with other Member States and, in particular, with some nuclear weapons States and members of the European Union, has always urged their active and non-discriminatory contributions towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

The way ahead

19. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the opinion that pending the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no country in the region should develop, produce or test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing on their territories, or territories under their control, of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, and that the countries of the region should refrain from actions that run counter to the letter and spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation

of Nuclear Weapons and other international resolutions and documents relating to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

20. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Review Conferences have a significant role in the realization of such a zone in the Middle East. Such a zone should be realized through the establishment of a special body in the Review Conferences which would consider and recommend proposals for the introduction of ways and means, in terms of concrete recommendations, for urgent and practical steps for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

21. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the firm belief that an agreed plan of action and timetable for universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, especially in the Middle East, should be a top priority on the agenda of all States parties to the Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapon States. There should be enough pressure on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards to pave the way for the long-sought-after goal of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

22. Finally, the unconditional adherence by Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the conclusion of a full-scope safeguard agreement with IAEA would, undoubtedly, lead to the early realization of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[2 April 2008]

1. Iraq believes in the necessity and importance of making the Middle East a region free from weapons of mass destruction and, above all, nuclear weapons. On that basis it has been active at the level of the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the League of Arab States and other relevant international forums.

2. Iraq has expressed its abiding belief in the importance of establishing a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It has put that view into practice by supporting the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly under the agenda item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" and the decisions taken by regional and international organizations and conferences in that connection. Iraq has also actively sought to rid the region of the peril of nuclear weapons by acceding to and ratifying agreements prohibiting weapons of mass destruction. Security Council resolution 1762 (2007) affirmed that Iraq was free from weapons of mass destruction. The Permanent Constitution of the Republic of Iraq, article 9 (e), provides that "the Government of Iraq shall respect and implement Iraq's international obligations regarding the non-proliferation, non-development, non-production and non-utilization of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and shall prohibit associated equipment, materiel, technologies and delivery systems for use in the development, manufacture, production and utilization of such weapons".

3. By virtue of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security which was conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council is required to implement its resolutions and take action to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction. Such resolutions would have a clear effect in achieving regional and global peace and security. They include resolution 487 (1981), which calls upon Israel to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and resolution 687 (1991), paragraph 14.

4. Iraq therefore believes that any effort to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East must be preceded by some fundamental steps. Israel should begin nuclear disarmament and accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It should place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards, declare its stockpile of nuclear weapons and materials, dismantle its weapons of mass destruction and implement the relevant international resolutions.

5. Those essential first steps would contribute to the easing of tension in the region and would make it possible to consider such subsequent steps as the following:

(a) The declaration by the relevant regional parties of their commitment to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone and immediate abstention from taking any actions that are contrary to that objective. Such declarations should be deposited with the Security Council.

(b) The discontinuation by the States of the region of the conclusion of any treaties or agreements with any other party that would afford them the opportunity to use or threaten to use existing and stockpiled nuclear weapons or such weapons imported from outside the region.

(c) The declaration by the States of the region that they will not use conventional or nuclear weapons in order to attack or sabotage nuclear installations that are dedicated to peaceful purposes and subject to international monitoring.

(d) The deposition with the Security Council by States outside the region that possess nuclear technologies of declarations that they will not take measures that are inconsistent with the establishment of the zone and will provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a list of nuclear materials and elements exported to States parties in the Middle East.

Japan

[Original: English]
[22 May 2008]

1. Japan supports establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the regions concerned and on the condition that the establishment of such zones would contribute to regional stability and security.

2. Lack of progress in the establishment of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East poses a serious concern. Japan supported, and continues to fully support, the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which calls for the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass

destruction — nuclear, chemical and biological — and their delivery systems. Japan believes that progress in the establishment of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East will further strengthen the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Following the previous sessions, Japan again joined, at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, the consensus adoption of resolution 62/18, on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

3. The establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East will ultimately require the adherence by all States in the region to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Chemical Weapons Convention. The adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by all States in the region would also be a substantial and practical step towards this end. Japan has been actively taking part in the international efforts to encourage the universal adherence to these multilateral instruments on the disarmament of weapons of mass destruction. As part of such endeavours, Japan supported the resolution (GC (51)/res/17) entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East" at the fifty-first regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 20 September 2007. Furthermore, Japan on various occasions urged the Government of Israel to become a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible. Japan has also urged other Middle Eastern countries to join at the earliest date the relevant treaties related to weapons of mass destruction to which they are not parties in order to foster an environment conducive to the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region.

4. It is imperative that compliance with those legal instruments be fully assured. Japan has urged the Iranian Government to comply with the requirements of all the relevant IAEA Board resolutions and Security Council resolutions regarding Iran's nuclear programme, including the suspension of all enrichment-related activities and the ratification and implementation of the Additional Protocol. In this context, Japan also stresses the necessity of strengthening the IAEA safeguards system, which plays a vital role in underpinning the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Japan strongly believes that the conclusion of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols by all States in the region is essential for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Japan, with the aim of achieving universal adherence to the comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, is ready to share its expertise and to provide technical assistance to those interested States in the region.

5. Japan is firmly committed to supporting the Middle East peace process, considering that it should be the key to regional stability, which is a vital factor in establishing the conditions for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Based on the recognition that the only way to achieve peace in the Middle East is through the realization of peaceful coexistence between the two nations of Israel and Palestine, Japan has been making its utmost efforts to that end. In particular, Japan has been engaging in the following measures:

(a) Using its neutral position of favouring neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians, Japan maintains high-level political dialogue with both Israel and the

Palestinian Authority in order to encourage them to advance the peace process. For instance, following the visit of the then Foreign Minister, Taro Aso, to Israel and the Palestinian territories in August 2007, the Government of Japan invited Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to Japan in February 2008, in order to support his commitment to making every effort to conclude a peace agreement with the Palestinians before the end of 2008;

(b) In the economic sphere, Japan has been actively involved in assisting the Palestinians since the Oslo Accords of 1993. As of March 2008, Japan has disbursed a total of more than $938 million in assistance to the Palestinians, and is committed to extending a further $150 million, which was pledged at the international donors' conference for the Palestinian State held in Paris in December 2007;

(c) The Government of Japan has actively been initiating and sponsoring various projects that will contribute to confidence-building between the Israelis and the Palestinians. In addition to that, Japan, based on its efforts in the fields mentioned above, proposed and is steadily promoting, in cooperation with Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, an initiative to create the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" in an area of the Jordan Valley for the purpose of creating a further viable Palestinian State.

Kuwait

[Original: English]
[29 May 2008]

1. The State of Kuwait has established for itself a basic guiding principle to deal with issues relating to international and regional activities concerning all kinds of weapons of mass destruction and their non-proliferation in the world in general, and in the Middle East region in particular. Therefore, the international community and the General Assembly have encountered a clear and positive acceptance by the State of Kuwait of the evaluation strategy that the United Nations follows, represented in the agreements and conventions formulated against all kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

2. The State of Kuwait views, from its own perspective, this issue as a resolved one. Out of its belief in international peace and security, the State of Kuwait is party to the majority of the United Nations instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, it became an active member in the committee demanding to make the Middle East region free from weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

3. At the international level, Kuwait's position vis-à-vis the question of weapons of mass destruction has been characterized by being consistent for more than 30 consecutive years. Since 1974, the Arab States, with the participation of the State of Kuwait, have attempted to keep this issue on the agenda of the international community, striving to make the Middle East region a zone free from all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

4. During the 1995 Review Conference, which is considered the most important international forum in the ambit of disarmament, the Arab States, including the State of Kuwait, have achieved a huge success in the issuance of the famous resolution known as the Middle East resolution, which demands the creation of a zone free of

weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. This resolution was adopted by the nuclear States as part of the deal to extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which succeeded later in its extension.

5. The success achieved by the Arab States in the issuance of the Middle East resolution, with the condition of indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, has led them to hasten the accession of the Arab States not already parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which in turn led the 2000 Review Conference to be characterized by the accession of all the Arab States to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and becoming parties to it.

6. The effectiveness of the State of Kuwait is characterized by its offering all the financial and moral means in the international and regional arenas for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. The State of Kuwait did not fall behind in fulfilling any Arab requirement aiming to serve international peace and security, and did not hesitate in participating in all international forums in this regard.

7. The State of Kuwait commends the statements issued by the Summits of Arab States, some of which involve the following aspects:

(a) The emphasis by the Arab States to comply with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and lend their support as the main pillar for the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the region;

(b) Their express refusal of the possession of any country in the Middle East of nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction, due to their dangerous effects on security, stability and peace, and the environment in the region;

(c) Peace and stability in the region will not be achieved unless Israel complies — just like the rest of the States in the region — with the rules and provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and subjects all of its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguard regime of IAEA;

(d) The ideal solution to the problem of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is to pursue a comprehensive regional approach, by adopting the Arab initiative to make the Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction, foremost among them nuclear weapons.

8. Concerning the aforementioned, the State of Kuwait cannot but stress its position vis-à-vis the question of weapons of mass destruction and its commitment to stand by the international and regional efforts aimed at creating a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, and insist that the confinement of nuclear weapons to Israel can only represent a grave danger to the peace, stability and environment of the region.

Netherlands

[Original: English]
[11 June 2008]

1. At its sixty-second session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 62/18, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", without a vote. The following is a response both to the request of the

Secretariat for the views of the Government of the Netherlands on the issues covered by the resolution, for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, and to paragraph 7 of the resolution, in which the Assembly invites all States to render their assistance in the establishment of the zone.

2. The Netherlands attaches great importance to the voluntary establishment of internationally recognized and effective nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with the guidelines adopted at the 1999 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is consistent with a variety of objectives. The Netherlands wrote a working paper on the guidelines for a nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty for the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/PC.II/WP.23), which was issued by the Presidency of the European Union. The important contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime and to regional and world peace and security has been universally recognized. Nuclear-weapon-free zones should be established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. The Netherlands also recognizes the continuing importance of the existing legally binding security assurances. Positive and negative security assurances can act as incentives for other States to abstain from acquiring nuclear weapons.

3. These nuclear-weapon-free zones are in conformity with the principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which forms the cornerstone of the non-proliferation policy of the Netherlands. With regard to article VII of the Treaty, the Netherlands believes that decision No. 2 of the 1995 Extension and Review Conference and the outcome document of the 2000 Review Conference reaffirm the need to establish additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in regions of tension such as the Middle East. The establishment of a verifiable zone in the Middle East free of all nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery will enhance security and stability in the region. The Netherlands remains committed to and recognizes the value of the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex).

Qatar

[Original: English]
[17 June 2008]

The State of Qatar strongly supports the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and the establishment of an effective and reliable verification mechanism, while upholding the right of countries to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and while stressing that countries that have not yet agreed to make their nuclear activities subject to the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards should do so.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[6 June 2008]

1. Spain's foreign policy, in keeping with that of the European Union, is one of firm commitment to the multilateral non-proliferation system, with the clear hope that the principal treaties in this field achieve universal acceptance.

2. The ratification by Spain of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entailed the recognition of its three fundamental pillars: preventing further States from acquiring or developing nuclear weapons; promoting cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; and working towards nuclear disarmament. Hence, Spain supports, as a general principle, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a means of achieving total nuclear disarmament.

3. In this regard, in 1995 and 2000, the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty reaffirmed their belief that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, particularly in regions where tension exists such as the Middle East, as well as the establishment of zones free of any type of weapons of mass destruction, should be encouraged as a priority issue, taking into account the characteristics of each region.

4. Spain has repeatedly supported the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which has been discussed by the General Assembly since 1974, as well as by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

5. Spain has the following comments to make regarding the series of confidence and security-building measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to the report of the Secretary-General of 10 October 1990 (A/45/435):

(a) On the whole, Spain considers that these measures continue to be adequate and remain valid;

(b) Nevertheless, the general context needs to be brought up to date because, in some aspects, the situation differs from the one presented in 1990.[1] Consequently, a renewed effort should be made to update the study, in order to give new impetus towards achieving the final goal;

(c) The process of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone and the confidence and security-building measures for this region should be based on the following principles:

- The final goal would be that all the States in the region ratify the principal treaties and conventions on weapons of mass destruction, particularly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.
- The geographical delimitation should depend on the freely made decision of the States in the region, seeking to ensure that it is as extensive as possible and making a gradual increase in the area acceptable. The inclusion of international waters does not appear to be appropriate, since such waters are

[1] For example, it does not include the 1995 security guarantees.

governed by different legal regimes; therefore, only the States and their territorial waters would be included in the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

6. As part of the nuclear-weapon-free zone agreement, the States in the region should undertake to sign comprehensive safeguard agreements with IAEA.

7. The confidence and security-building measures that are negotiated should be based on the principles of specificity, transparency, verifiability, reciprocity, voluntariness, progressivity and complementarity and should not be oriented strictly towards compliance with and verification of the nuclear-weapon-free zone, but should form part of a global peace and security agreement. The general purpose of these measures should be to lessen tension in the region, increasing mutual trust, transparency and predictability and thus reducing the probability of confrontation between the States.

8. The international community's support, both for the preparation and implementation of this process, as well as for monitoring compliance, is essential. Consequently, the international community and, especially, the major Powers should establish a system of guarantees to strengthen the security of the member States of the nuclear-weapon-free zone and, at the same time, deter them from resorting to nuclear proliferation mechanisms.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[12 June 2008]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic has consistently affirmed its firm commitment to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and expresses its deep concern at the insurmountable obstacle to that goal posed by Israel through its refusal to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It maintains that refusal to the present day, despite the international community's repeated admonitions that Israel's position is doing great damage to the credibility and universality of the Treaty, and effectively prevents the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, notwithstanding the efforts of the other parties involved, which have put forward a number of initiatives to that end.

2. The Syrian Arab Republic is of the view that the measures and arrangements necessary for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as called for by United Nations resolutions must include the following:

(a) Israel, the only State in the region to possess nuclear facilities and a nuclear stockpile, must accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a State not in possession of nuclear weapons, place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, and eliminate all its nuclear weapons. Israel must also comply with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) which explicitly calls upon it urgently to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

(b) The United Nations is the appropriate context for earnest discussions that would allow all concerned States in the Middle East to establish a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction and, above all, nuclear weapons.

3. The Syrian Arab Republic has spared no effort in urgently seeking to make the Middle East a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction and, above all,

nuclear weapons. The most recent of such efforts was the submission of a draft resolution to the Security Council on 29 December 2003, as a genuine initiative and sincere effort to rid the region of such weapons. However, certain influential Security Council States opposed that initiative in order to protect Israel and continue to support the development of its nuclear arsenal, which threatens the security and stability of the region. The Syrian Arab Republic recalls that its draft resolution remains in provisional form in Council archives, and calls on the Security Council to adopt it as swiftly as possible and ensure its implementation by all States of the region, without exception, in order to pave the way for the establishment of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction and, above all, nuclear weapons. Such measures are particularly urgent in view of the statements by the Prime Minister of Israel concerning his country's possession of nuclear weapons, which constitute a threat to the peace and security of the Middle East and a violation of international resolutions and commitments regarding the prevention of nuclear proliferation.